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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2012

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# INPORT NEWS

SERVING PORT COLBORNE • WAINFLEET • SHERKSTON • LOWBANKS • ISSUE NO. 52 VOLUME 16

For news updated daily see [www.inportnews.ca](http://www.inportnews.ca)

## Vale centre opening delayed

MARYANNE FIRTH  
 InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — It's official — the Vale Health and Wellness Centre will open its doors to the public on Feb. 16.

But that's much later than expected. And there's problems as a result.

The much-anticipated \$32-million facility is nearing completion and local user groups are anxious to get inside.

And while city council discussed Monday night whether it was possible to see the doors open any sooner, it seems that dream may be out of reach.

Ward 1 Coun. Bill Steele, also president of the Port Colborne Minor Hockey Association, hoped to see at least one of the rinks at the facility opened earlier in the new year.

With the delay in the centre's opening, Port Colborne Minor Hockey will likely have to cancel between 26 and 29 games, he told his fellow councillors. Ice time for January is already booked up at Westside Arena, as well as other area rinks, leaving hockey enthusiasts nowhere to strap on their skates.

Steele questioned whether it would be possible to do a soft opening on the centre's small ice pad, allowing for minor hockey games to take place as scheduled. The teams, he said, could access the rink and dressing rooms, with no one else including parents allowed inside.

The centre's rinks will be operable in January — the problem is staffing the remainder of the facility, said Ron Hanson, the city's



The Vale Health and Wellness Centre will not open as early as planned, forcing the cancellation of several hockey games.

DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

director of engineering and operations.

Once the public is invited in, even if only into the rinks, the accessible washrooms must be made avail-

able and they're located on the centre's warm side. Daily operation of the warm side will be managed by the YMCA, but not until February.

Opening early would have a "substantial impact" on city staff, as currently there are only enough staff members to oversee two ice pads, said Harry Hakim,

Port Colborne's manager of community services. This would mean the early closure of Westside Arena.

see CANCELLED | Page 2

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■ **HOCKEY STRIKE:** Local bars worry about impact

# Drop the puck already, hockey fans say

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

## PORT COLBORNE

— Martin Moskalyk's glad the National Football League still has games left in its season, but when the Super Bowl is over on February 3, he's worried about what will happen to his bar.

Moskalyk, who runs The City Tavern, said while the National Hockey League is on strike, customers have still been coming in to watch football and that's keeping things going on weekends.

"Our sales are fairly strong with football."

But during the week, when many of those same people would be in watching hockey games in the Main St. West bar, the strike is keeping them away.

"It dies down a bit during the week. I do believe come the new year, if hockey is not back, it will affect my business... there's no doubt in my mind," said Moskalyk.

The seven screens in his bar are his entertainment and once hockey fans leave, it's hard to draw them back through the doors, he added, as they find other things to do in the meantime.

During the last strike, which went the whole year, Moskalyk lost a lot of business and hopes history doesn't repeat itself.

"I hope hockey comes back before football ends."

Also hoping hockey comes back soon is Rick Cole, general manager of Don Cherry's Sports Grill, which has only been open since June of this year.

"There's no question the strike has hurt us," said Cole,



With four of 23 TV screens behind him, Rick Cole, general manager of Don Cherry's Sports Grill, says there's no question the NHL strike has hurt the bar, which has only been open since June of this year.

DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

adding being in a somewhat out of the way location, people may not come to the restaurant without the hockey games on.

Don Cherry's is located at Sugarloaf Harbour Marina, a

bustling location from spring to early fall, but quiet during late fall and winter.

"People are not used to the fact that we're open out here."

If the NHL season was in full force, Cole said with 23

TVs stationed around the restaurant, Don Cherry's could show every game on.

With no hockey, promotions he had planned around the game, like having retired NHL players

come in and sit with fans, or specials on during certain periods of various games, aren't being run.

"We have picked up some business with Christmas parties, but we'd be doing better

if the games were on."

If the restaurant is to pick back up, Cole said the hockey season would have to kick in on Jan. 14.

"That's the drop-dead date for a 48-game season."

## ■ CANCELLED

# 'Extensive list of deficiencies' needs to be investigated still

FROM PAGE 1

"The main concern of staff is the readiness of the facility," Hanson said of the Vale centre.

"We have an extensive list of deficiencies that need to be completed."

The contractor, Hanson said, has compiled a 15-page

list of deficiencies that need to be corrected prior to the city taking possession. This includes a variety of items, such as painting and architectural details, installation of proper safety rails and repair of stress fractures in the concrete floors.

"Deficiency lists are quite

common," he said, adding there are "always a number of items" to be addressed before the contractor leaves the project.

"These are things in the contract that are not quite complete."

In addition, there are concerns over having the public

in the building while the YMCA and other tenants are moving in their equipment, Hanson added.

Steele said the minor hockey board has received many questions about the facility and its opening. He was pleased to now have answers to provide to the

some 200 affected families.

"As much as I'd like to be in there today, we need to make sure everything is done right," Steele said.

The delay in completion is due in part to changes requested and paid for by the YMCA to the facility's warm side.

"The changes will leave the centre 'far better than when we started,'" he said.

City council voted keep the facility doors closed until the grand opening on Feb. 16. As a result, Westside Arena will remain open until Feb. 17.

maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca

■ **HISTORY:** Government recognizes Rideau Canal builders

# Canal worthy of designation: Allen

JOHN LAW  
QMI Agency Niagara

**NIAGARA FALLS** — They were built at virtually the same time. They both contributed mightily to Canada's economy and identity. They are both famous tourist attractions today.

So why is the federal government formally recognizing the workers who built Ottawa's Rideau Canal, but not the Welland Canal? It may be as simple as someone submitting a request first.

"Any aspect of human history may be considered," says Natalie Fay, media relations officer for Parks Canada. "To be considered for designation, it must have had a nationally significant impact on Canadian history or must illustrate a nationally important aspect of Canadian history."

Federal Environment Minister Peter Kent recently announced the construction workers who built the Rideau Canal — many of them Irish immigrants and French Canadian — will be recognized by the government for the deadly conditions they faced building the complex canal. The Rideau Canal connects Kingston, at the mouth of Lake Ontario, to Ottawa, further inland on the Ottawa River. During its construction from 1826 to 1832, several hundred workers died from malaria and accidents. Some of the dead remain unidentified.

The recognition will be in addition to the canal's designation in 1925 as a National Historic Site of Canada.

"The Rideau Canal is one of the main reasons Ottawa is today the capital of G8 nation," said John Baird, minister of Foreign Affairs. "We owe those responsible for the canal's construction an immense debt of gratitude and respect."

The Welland Canal, constructed between 1825 and 1833, was designated as a National Historic Site of Canada in 1929. It connects Lake Ontario and Lake Erie and was necessary to allow shipping between the two Great Lakes — otherwise impossible because of the might waterfalls on the



The John B. Aird heads downbound in the Welland Canal at Port Colborne. The Welland Canal was built about the same time as the Rideau Canal near Ottawa, whose 19th-century builders were recently given national historic significance by the federal government.



**The Welland Canal is of great historical significance, not only to us in Niagara but the entire country."**

MP Malcolm Allen

Niagara River.

But Welland MP Malcolm Allen believes its workers deserve the same recognition from the government.

While there were fatalities, it was nowhere near the death toll building the Rideau Canal.

"Maybe we were just more safety-conscious in Niagara," said Allen, an NDP politician,

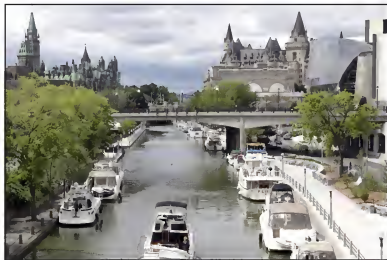
who added he has already written to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to have the Welland Canal builders recognized.

"The Welland Canal is of great historical significance, not only to us in Niagara but the entire country. When you think about linking upper and lower Canada together ... you think about the folks that built the very first one and the labour that would have taken at that particular moment in time."

"And the whole sense of how to make that work — I mean, the Welland Canal is an absolute technological marvel."

The Rideau Canal and its builders will be commemorated with two new plaques and accompanying interpretive panels to be installed at prominent locations along the canal.

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This file photo shows the Rideau Canal through downtown Ottawa. The federal government recently bestowed national historic significance on the builders of the canal.

QMI AGENCY

# INFORM NEWS

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## Beef up the day

**W**ainfleet council made a mistake this past week in not passing a recommendation to beef up a bay inside a public works building to store a paramedic vehicle.

The cost to upgrade the bay, to meet post-disaster classification, was set at \$53,000 and would have only taken a couple of weeks to complete. The Ontario building code requires vehicles like ambulances to be kept in post-disaster facilities.

We understand that in this day and age, councils have to make prudent decisions on behalf of their taxpayers, but this one instance where council should have bitten the bullet and spent the money.

Niagara EMS just put a community response unit — a 12-hour a day, seven day a week response unit — into the township in the last month to cut down response times in the township. It will also be more than just an emergency responder.

Five paramedics were hired on to run the unit, two full-time and three replacement paramedics. Those paramedics will now have to drive to Welland or Port Colborne ambulance bases, where the SUV can be safely stored, begin their vehicle check and then head to Wainfleet for their shift.

The drive time cuts into time paramedics could be spending on-site in the community and could see them, as Mayor Jeff Levesy fears, drawn into use in Port Colborne or Welland.

Five Chief Harry Plagg told council the unit is in the township for 11 1/2 hours of its 12 hours shift and the added drive time would cut that down to 10 hours. That's quite a chunk of time to lose.

The whole point of the community response unit was to be in Wainfleet and get to know the people and community. That could be lost if they have to start out somewhere else.

We understand people will say the drive time isn't that long and service won't be lost, but it's not about either, it's about the message it sends to Niagara EMS.

The program has been in place for about a month, and Wainfleet is already balking at costs associated with the program. Wainfleet asked for a community response unit, it should stand behind that request and make the changes needed to its building so the paramedic SUV can be stored there and be closer to the residents it is supposed to serve.

We hope township council will give sober second thought to the recommendation it turned down and bring the issue back up at the meeting in the new year. \$53,000 isn't asking for much when it comes to the health and safety of the community.

**■ COLUMN: I've been thinking**

## The story of the boy from Defiance, Ohio

**FR. DAVID GRAHAM SCOTT**  
St Ignatius of Antioch  
Orthodox Church

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16).

I would like to tell you a true story from Guldpoints about a five year old boy named Jason Young. His parents live in Defiance, Ohio. Jason had a rare form of leukemia from the age of three. He endured blood and bone marrow tests and months of chemotherapy.

But in 1983 the doctor told his mother Brenda that Jason did not have long to live and would not be comfortable at home. And he went to Jason's bed and asked him if he like to go home and not to have to come to the hospital for any more needles and drugs. Jason said, "That sounds good." His mother wondered how the doctor said the doctor was really saying.

She searched Jason's eyes

for a sign of distress. And her gaze fell on the stuffed clown beside him — Big Jon. The clown had been with Jason through it all. He was handmade with felt eyes, nose and mouth, perpetually smiling. Big Jon went with Jason to every appointment, and slept with him in every hospital bed. Jason ate with him, rode his tricycle with him in the basket. They were inseparable.

As Brenda was driving Jason home, she passed his favourite park. She remembered that one fall day Jason had asked her what makes the leaves turn colours. She told him that in the spring it's like being born and they are green and in the fall they turn beautiful colours before they die.

Jason had said, "My friend Ryan died. He had leukemia like me. Am I going to die, Mom?" Brenda managed to say, "What do you think?" Jason said, "Somebody I guess. But not for a long time." Soon his eyes

watched a woolly caterpillar crawling over a leaf. Jason never brought up dying again.

Two weeks after getting home from the hospital that last time, Brenda's sister-in-law called to say she was bringing her son Mikey over to play with Jason. They lived two hours away. Brenda knew it would be the last time the boys saw each other.

The night before their visit Jason said, "Mom, when Brenda called the end of a long arduous race. He watched his cousin hold Big Jon close and nodded.

It was then that Brenda sensed God holding Jason in his loving arms and she realized that she did not have to prepare Jason for what was ahead; he was preparing her. Jason died a week later, surrounded by everyone he loved.

Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not renounce all that he has as a little child will by no means enter it" (Luke 18:17).

## 'Bob the Border Guy' - Retired and telling a



**WILLIAM THOMAS**

**HUMOUR**

Street area of Niagara Falls. It was the very first Canada/U.S. Free Trade Zone.

But at the Peace Bridge it was usually carloads of "bingo" buses from Buffalo. All were nice, easygoing ladies hoping to hit the jackpot at one of Fort Erie's many illegal casinos, that game being illegal in New York State. Bob asked one of his favourite buddies for a picture to be used in a presentation he was putting together.

"If I'd have known you was going to take my picture," she said beaming. "I'd have brought my teeth." Bob still has the photo.

Much like the hours just before the bars close, the midnight shift at the border brings most of the trouble.

There was the no-nonsense guy in a suit who flashed his

Buffalo Police Department badge as soon as he pulled up to Bob's window.

"In transit to Detroit," he said. Code for official police business.

"The your prisoners?" asked Bob, about the scruffy looking passenger.

"Ah, that's my superior," replied the detective.

Opel Complaint to Customs Superintendent signed. Officer reprimanded.

There were the two California hippies in a van who pulled up to the Queenston Bridge after making a wrong turn, still sucking on tubes that were hooked up to a water bong of hashish bubbling away on the centre console. I'm guessing their holiday in The Falls while awaiting trial was "far out."

There was the Toronto woman found with a suitcase full of baby paraphernalia but no baby. Mystery solved when photos were found of her with her New York boyfriend, looking like the Gerber Food twins, taken in a rather large crib. Embarrassing.

time for Mikey to leave. And Jason gave Big Jon one last hug and said, "Bye, Big Jon. Take care of Mikey. He'll take good care of you too." Jason held out the stuffed clown to Mikey, who looked to his Mom and then to his aunt and finally to Jason. "It's okay," Jason said, putting Big Jon in Mikey's arms. "I want you to have him."

Brenda could tell that Jason was tired, but he was positively radiant, as if he'd reached the end of a long arduous race. He watched his cousin hold Big Jon close and nodded.

It was then that Brenda sensed God holding Jason in his loving arms and she realized that she did not have to prepare Jason for what was ahead; he was preparing her. Jason died a week later, surrounded by everyone he loved.

Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not renounce all that he has as a little child will by no means enter it" (Luke 18:17).

Another woman coming back to Canada after a wild weekend in New York City had a unique device that went off like a lawnmower as soon as Bob opened her suitcase.

Late one night at the Peace Bridge a pickup truck rolled in with North Carolina plates. A cursory check revealed a reddish brown liquid seeping out the back between the tailgate and the floor.

The driver had a southern drawl but no explanation. Bob naturally sent him to "secondary" where they did provide some answers after a call to state police in North Carolina. The liquid was blood; the driver had killed someone back home and made a run for the border after disposing of the body.

"Detain driver!" Another female pulled up to Bob's booth at the Rainbow Bridge in a car with Pennsylvania plates. The man said he was coming to Canada on a holiday... with his mother.

see **THOMAS** | Page 5



A \$700-million wind energy project in south Chatham-Kent has received conditional approval from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

## Consultant to undertake review of turbine farm documents

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — The township will use a consultant to review Niagara Region Wind Corp.'s package for its proposed wind farm project in the north end of Wainfleet.

Jones Consulting Group Ltd. will carry out the work at a cost of \$8,200, plus disbursements and HST, aldermen heard last week.

The proposed wind farm would see a total of five three-megawatt wind turbines built in Wainfleet, including collector lines to transmit power to a connection point on the hydro grid.

Jones Consulting Group has carried out similar work for the township, reviewing the municipal consultation package put forward by Wainfleet Wind Energy Inc. "The municipal consultation package covers a range of issues, including but not limited to road use, emergency management procedures and building permit requirements.

Ald. David Wyatt questioned the drafts reports and requirements listed in the report presented by township planner Grant Munday.

"Who determines what reports are done?" Wyatt asked.

Munday said the province has certain requirements, as outlined by the Ministry of Environment, that must be met.

Wildlife impact, he added in response to another question by Wyatt, was one of the requirements when it came to stud-

ies to be conducted.

"What about health and safety (on people)?" Wyatt asked.

Munday said the province did not ask for those kinds of reports. "They eliminate health impacts, but are worried about birds," said Wyatt, leaving Munday unsure of what to say in response.

Ald. Betty Kane questioned the timing of the report and said half of the commenting period of 60 days was already over.

"Is there enough time for Jones to go through the material, give us a report and submit it?" she asked.

Munday said Jones can't meet a Feb. 5 deadline, but Niagara Region Wind Corp. is willing to wait for comments from the township before it submits its materials to the Ministry of Environment.

"They're not happy with our response, but they do want our comments," he added.

Mayor April Jeffs asked if Niagara Region Wind Corp. would also be paying for advertising for a public meeting to be held by the township on the proposed wind farm.

Munday said Niagara Region Wind Corp. is not required to hold any meetings under the Green Energy Act, but the township had to under the Planning Act.

"I can request Niagara Region Wind Corp. pay the cost of advertising," he said.

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### FROM PAGE C4

When Bob could find no other person in the vehicle, he was presented with a bulging bag containing a dead crow.

"She travels with me wherever I go."

"That's nice, sir. But you and your mother will have to return to the United States."

While still at the Peace Bridge and working secondary inspection

Bob encountered a very distraught 25-year-old man from a small town south of Buffalo. He explained that his wife had left him and taken the kids and he just wanted to drive along the Niagara River to figure things out.

While searching the glove compartment of his pickup truck, Bob learned that the

driver's licence was under suspension. He also found a note, a kind of plan on how the young man was going to change his life around.

Verbatim, here is that note: 1) Quit drinking for kids & health. 2) Get job. 3) Find house in country. 4) Get custody of kids. 5) Get driver's licence back. 6) Find God, religion. 7) Find a nice woman. 8) Exercise regularly. 9) Love children unconditionally. 10) Get rifle. 11) Get dog.

One night at the Queenston Bridge, he met the legend, Chubby Checker.

Entertainers entering Canada were logged by an Immigration Manifest Form which had to be reconciled upon exiting the country. Bob boarded the Chubby Checker Express, a

dormitory on wheels, crossed off all the names of the roadies on the manifest.

Hey where that Checkers guy?" asked Bob.

"Behind that curtain," a techie replied.

Pulling aside the curtain Bob came face to face with Chubby Checker who was in his bunk bed doing the horizontal twist with a woman, not on the list.

Sorry Chubby, International interruptus protocol.

Congratulations 'Bob The Border Guy' and have a wonderful and well-deserved retirement. You have served your country well in difficult and okay, really strange situations. You will be fondly remembered by all who knew and met you. All except Chubby Checker.

## Tales from the Canadian border

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■ **SCHOOL BUILDINGS:** Declining student numbers put three southern-tier high schools on chopping block

# High hopes, low enrolment

VICTORIA GRAY  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Marlene Scott went to Port Colborne High School. Her children went there. And now so do her grandchildren.

She wants future generations to continue attending the Elgin St. school, too.

She doesn't want to see it close, but there's a strong possibility it could as District School Board of Niagara officials struggle to balance the operation of aging Lake Erie area high school facilities with declining enrolment.

"Hopefully if they see the dedication of the community it will influence their decision," Scott said.

"If you want something you have to work for it and I'm willing to work for this."

Last Thursday night, the school board's accommodation review committee invited the public to tour both Fort Erie Secondary School and then Port High to see what's at stake. People were also encouraged to share their views about the future of the schools.

Board superintendent and

ARC chair Cam Hathaway said school boards all over the province have experienced a large drop in student enrolment over the past decade, and it looks like the problem is only going to get worse.

The student population in Port Erie and Port Colborne has been declining since 2007.

Port Erie Secondary and Port Colborne High can cater to more than 1,000 students each year, but both are now sitting at about 50% capacity. Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School — also part of the southern-tier three-school review — can hold 558 students and now has 506.

The school board predicts Fort Erie Secondary and Port High will be operating at less than 27% capacity by 2022 and Ridgeway-Crystal Beach will sit at about 60%.

On Nov. 22 about 70 students, parents and committee members toured Ridgeway-Crystal Beach and on Thursday about 60 parents and students toured Fort Erie and Port High before examining in the latter's gymnasium more than 50 information boards displaying statistical and geo-



VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo

Murray Balough, left, Eddie Feiertag, Cheryl James and Marlene Scott tour Port Colborne High School to learn about its amenities at an accommodation review committee meeting Thursday night to get information about three southern-tier high schools that may close.

graphical information as well as details about each school's renovations history.

"We want members of the community to have as much information as possible, so

they can help us determine what the best course of action is," Hathaway said. "The voice of the community is very important and the more people know the better their

solutions to the problem will be. We hope to take some of their views and submit them to the board to help them make their decision."

The ARC committee has outlined three possible solutions. The first is to close all three schools and build a new school one of the locations or at a new location. The second solution would be to close two schools and put all the students in one school.

The third solution is to close Ridgeway-Crystal Beach and Fort Erie, build a new school in Fort Erie and leave Port Colborne High School for another ARC committee linking north and south

Niagara.

Families from both cities understand the schools are about 100 years old and that they are all attached to the school in their respective communities.

Jessica Cotton of Fort Erie said she knows something needs to change and not everyone is going to be happy with what trustees endorse.

"I do think every community should have its own school because no matter where you put a new high school someone is going to have a long and very dangerous drive in the winter," she said.

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■ **ROADS:** Rail company makes upgrades to O'Reilly's Rd.

# CP roadwork related to turbine parts

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

**WAINFLEET** — Intersection improvements carried out O'Reilly's Rd. and Regional Rd. 27 didn't cost the taxpayers of Wainfleet, or Niagara, township council heard last week.

Greg Wusiman, Wainfleet's departing director of operations, told council that road work was carried out by CP Rail on the company's dime, and that it exceeds standards for road

work.

Ald. Richard Dykstra said the issue and said wanted to know if the township, or region, had paid for the work.



Wusiman

He said a resident had asked him about some large cranes at the CP Rail yard at the south end O'Reilly's Rd.

and transport trucks carrying wind turbine parts into the sprawling yard.

Wusiman said CP Rail approached the township earlier in the year to let it know large wind turbine parts would be coming into the yard and loaded on trains bound for locations outside Wainfleet.

"There was a problem with the turning radius for trucks at the corner ... it is a tight corner," said Wusiman.

The rail company made the road improvements and paved it to specifications



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Road work carried out by CP Rail at the corner of O'Reilly's Rd. and Regional Rd. 27 was done to allow large trucks to make the turn. The work was paid for by CP Rail.



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NOTICE

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Please be advised that Council for the Township of Wainfleet will be holding a Public Open House on **Thursday, January 10, 2013, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.** in the Township Municipal Office, Council Chambers, 31940 Highway #3, Wainfleet. The purpose of this Open House is to present the Draft Zoning Bylaw and Draft Site Plan Control Guidelines and seek public input concerning these documents. Public input is a critical component of this project and will help shape these critical planning documents and overall development regulation in the Township. All Wainfleet residents, property owners and other stakeholders are invited to attend. The Township of Wainfleet has retained Sorenson Gravely Lowes Planning Associates Inc. Participants are required to R.S.V.P. to Stacey Duncan at sduncan@wainfleet.ca or (905) 899-3463, extension 224. Additional information is available at [www.wainfleet.ca](http://www.wainfleet.ca).

higher than what the township requires.

"They improved it for our use."

Dykstra also had a question about a sign stating the

area was private property and there was no trespassing. He added the sign had since disappeared after it was reported to him.

Wusiman was not aware

of any sign and said the road was open to anyone up until a gate at the southern end. Anything beyond that gate was CP Rail property, he said.

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■ **ENERGY PARK:** Kleinsmith Rd. entrance to be altered

# Conditions stipulated for Nyon road

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Though its proposed energy park is still tied up in Ontario Municipal Board hearings, Nyon Oil Inc. has put forth a request to city council to see a new road built to access its lands more efficiently from Hwy. 140.

Council was asked to con-

sider construction of the new access, which would include the closure of the existing Kleinsmith Rd. entrance. It would be built north of the Kleinsmith Rd. and south of Townline Tunnel Rd.

A recommendation from city staff to support the request was approved, but not without a long list of terms that Nyon must adhere to in order for

the road access to move forward.

No action must be taken by Nyon, other than obtaining regional and provincial approvals in principle at the company's cost, until after the current OMB hearings have been completed.

The next hearing is scheduled for April.

It has also been deemed that all costs associated

with the closure of the existing Kleinsmith Rd. access to Hwy. 140 be borne by the company.

Nyon is also required to meet with the affected landowners, identify any issues that require mitigation and provide a list of proposed solutions to the city.

Nyon must also identify mitigation measures that will be implemented to

ensure the only resident of Kleinsmith Rd. will not be denied ongoing access to his home during the construction process.

Work cannot start without the city approving a schedule of start and finish dates.

The city has also reserved the right to require a contribution from Nyon for ongoing maintenance of the new access for wear expected

from heavy vehicle traffic coming to and from the energy park.

Ward 4 Coun. Barbara Butters put forth an amendment to the recommendation, which was approved, that asked that city staff also meet with affected landowners to ensure their concerns are addressed.

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Twitter: @mftrhTribune

■ **HEALTH CARE:** Interest in exploring cross-border partnership

# SNHCC to set priorities in new year

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

**WAINFLEET** — South Niagara Health Care Corp. is getting ready to spring into action.

The group held a meeting last week at Wainfleet Arena to continue toward effectively improving health-care services in south Niagara.

People in attendance, including representatives from each of the region's southern municipalities, reviewed the corporation's strategic plan, established in June, and worked to attach actions to each issue or gap in service that had previously been identified.

For instance, the group plans to address duplication of services and promote resource sharing by creat-

ing an inventory of health-care services in the southern-tier communities. The inventory will be accessible through a web-based portal and include both primary and ancillary health-care services, as well as specialized programming such as fall prevention and mental health and addictions services.

Also under the microscope are ways to educate the public about the "changing venues of health care" that now include facilities such as urgent and ambulatory care centres, Port Colborne Mayor and SNHCC chair Vance Badway said Friday.

A separate working group must be created to deal exclusively with communication of information that is critical to current health issues in the participating communities, he

said.

Several actions were also created in relation to the implementation of appropriate critical care pathways in the area, Badway said. This has been a main focus for group since its inception.

Three recommendations were passed by the board and will be sent to the respective councils of Niagara's southern municipalities for review.

The first will see that the next SNHCC meeting, expected to take place some time in January, will focus on the prioritization of the recently-set actions.

This will allow the group to focus on "knocking each action off the list one by one," Badway said.

As the actions are prioritized, pro-

posed time lines for each will be put in place, he added.

The second recommends that the tripartite committee, established to review Niagara Health System's hospital improvement plan, be re-established and continue on with its mandate.

The third asks that the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network and CritiCall Ontario work toward a collaboration with the Kaleida Health hospital system in Buffalo to see a cross-border partnership initiated to allow access to critical medical services not available locally.

During Wednesday's meeting, the board also reviewed the City of Welland's petition. The document asks that the provincial govern-

ment retain services at Welland and Niagara Falls hospitals, and for a new south Niagara hospital to be constructed in a more central Welland location, rather than the recommended Niagara Falls site.

South Niagara Health Care Corp. supports Welland's request to maintain existing services until the new hospital has built, but has not included in its endorsement the section regarding construction.

"That's because we're not there yet," Badway said, adding gaps in information need to be filled before a decision on the best location for the proposed hospital can be made.

maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca  
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■ **COMMUNITY:** Melina's fundraisers help to put toys under trees

## Restaurant rallies for Sally Ann

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Customers at Melina's Family Restaurant were very generous during three fundraisers this fall, helping the Port Colborne restaurant raise close to \$3,000.

Those funds were put towards buying all kinds of toys that were to be donated to the Salvation Army for its annual toy drive, which is held across Canada.

Restaurant owner Melina Popovich said it's the third

year her business, which has been at 115 Main St. West for the past five years, has held the fundraiser.

"This is the biggest so far."

She and employee Lori Shiver said the restaurant's customers are very loyal and very giving. Part of the front section of Melina's was crammed full of toys in front of a Christmas tree.

Shiver said the first fundraiser was held in August and it was rummage/garage sale which managed to raise \$600.

The second fundraiser was a bake sale held on

Thanksgiving weekend.

"Customers donated their own baked goods and we raised \$1,100," she said.

The last fundraiser was a silent auction held about a month ago in the back of the restaurant. Shiver said 26 Port Colborne businesses donated items for the event.

"We raised \$1,000 from that."

In addition to supporting the fundraisers, customers brought in toys, cash and \$140 worth of Canadian Tire money.

"We'll be doing this again next year," said Popovich.



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Melina's Family Restaurant's Lori Shiver, left, and owner Melina Popovich hold some of the toys the Port Colborne restaurant donated to Salvation Army's annual toy drive. The two said restaurant customers were very generous during three fundraisers held this year.



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